THE

HISTORY

Of the most Renowned

QUEEN *ELIZABETH*,

And her great FAVOURITE

The EARL of *ESSEX*.

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BRITISH MUSEUM

THE HISTORY OF QUEEN *ELIZABETH*, AND The EARL of *ESSEX*.

THE extraordinary Merits of the Earl of *Eſſex*, and the great Favour the Queen had ſo often ſhewn him, were Matters of different Speculations to thoſe who were Spectators of his Fall; they knew that the Queen had conferred upon him the greateſt Honours of the Kingdom, and that at the Time of his Fall, he was General of her Army againſt the Earl of *Tyrone*, who had rais'd a Rebellion in *Ireland*, yet ſo powerful were his Enemies, that all his Precautions were in vain; for, after his ſtrenuous Efforts, he was confined a Priſoner in his own Houſe. Queen *Elizabeth* was indeed arrived to a Pitch of Glory above all Women in that Age, not only for her Dignity, but alſo for her Courage, her Wiſdom, and her Conduct: But all theſe were ſo far from being Proof againſt the Power of Love, that they made that Paſſion burn more fiercely: And this it was that made her have ſo great a Tenderneſs for this unfortunate Earl, when he appeared as a Criminal. For tho' he happened to fall under her Diſpleaſure, yet ſhe was ſo far from taking Delight in his Sufferings, that ſhe conceived an Abhorrence of thoſe mercileſs Maxims that oppoſed her ſofter

Inclinations. But tho' the Queen could not forbear loving, yet ſhe uſed all imaginable Caution to prevent the Diſcovery of that Paſſion: This made her keep her Bed, and admit no Company but the Counteſs of *Nottingham*. Before her ſhe gave Vent to her Tears; the Queen's Grief was too extreme to be kept in; and her Sighs and frequent repeating of *Eſſex*'s Name, confirmed the Counteſs of the Truth of what ſhe before could not be aſſur'd of; but the Counteſs had ſo far Command of herſelf as to conceal her being concerned in that Adventure: So ſeeming only ſenſible of the Queen's Diſquiet, ſhe endeavoured by all Means to comfort her. Ah! Madam, ſaid the Queen, the Force I have long put upon myſelf, has made you think, perhaps, that the Height of my Spirit has rais'd me above the Infirmities of Nature; but alas! poor *Elizabeth* is a Slave to her Weakneſs. The Earl of *Eſſex* is no leſs famous for the Victory gained over my Heart, than for his Treaſon againſt me. And I, who have maintained the Freedom of my Soul, and preſerv'd the Liberty of my Affection from ſubmitting to the Effort of all the Princes of *Europe*, have now the Misfortune to find my Inclination violently ſwayed in favour of a Perſon as ungraeful as faithleſs. You know what I have done to raiſe him, nor can you be ignorant how ill he hath requited me by his Crimes: A Man, who being in quiet Poſſeſſion of the beſt Offices of my Kingdom, and Maſter of my Affection, not forbear conſpiring againſt that Authority I was too much inclin'd to give him a Share of!

Thus far the Queen proceeded, but it was not in her Power to carry on her Diſcourſe. However, the Counteſs, pretending to comfort the Queen, prevailed with her to declare herſelf farther. No, Madam, (ſaid the Queen, in reply to what the Counteſs ſaid) there is no Comfort for me if the Earl of

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Eſſex die; you may eaſily gueſs, by what his Impriſonment hath done, what I am like to be reduced to by his Death; for tho' I abhor his Crimes, I have a Kindneſs for his Perſon, which makes me afraid that I ſhall pardon them all. You are ignorant of his Carriage towards me; I will give you the Relation of it: Being eſtabliſh'd on the Throne, my Court was quickly filled with Suitors of the higheſt Rank, 'twas in my Power to make a Husband and King at once. Thoſe that I thought had moſt Right to pretend to it, were the Earls of *Somerſet*, *Leiceſter*, *Arundel*, and *Hertford*: But finding myſelf uneaſy thro' their Importunities, I let them know, I deſign'd a ſingle Life; and to content them, I advanc'd them to conſiderable Employments, with which they were ſatisfied. When the Earls of *Northumberland* and *Weſtmorland* rebelled, the Earl of *Eſſex* ſignalized himſelf againſt them, and making about that Time his firſt Appearance at Court ſoon became acceptable to me. 'Twas from the Moment I firſt ſaw him, that I may date the Loſs of my Repoſe; and all the Oppoſition I made, ſerved only to make the Triumphs of his Victory the more illuſtrious: I could not look off him, and when I ſhunned the Sight of him, I carried the Idea of his Perſon in my Heart: So I inſenſibly gave up myſelf as a Captive to thoſe powerful Inclinations which had made me entertain ſuch pleaſing Ideas of the Earl of *Eſſex*; and making Uſe of the Services he had done me againſt the Earls of *Northumberland* and *Weſtmorland*, as a Ground for my Favour, I made him Knight of the Garter, Maſter of the Horſe, and one of the Privy Council. Thus was I conſtrained, that I might indulge my Weakneſs, to heap up freſh Honours upon him; for the higher I advanced him, the nearer he was to my Perſon, and the more Opportunity I had to gratify

the Complaiſance I had for him: And now the King of *Sweden*, the Emperor for his Son, and the Duke of *Anjou*, made their ſeveral Courts to me; which, tho' I received with Reſpect, yet I ſo order'd the Matter, that their Embaſſadors went home without any Fruit of their Embaſſy. Soon after I had another Royal Suitor; for the Duke of *Alanſon* reſolved to try his Fortune alſo, and that his Addreſſes might be effectual, would needs come himſelf; nor could I deny my conſent for his Voyage to *London*. When, after all the Advantages he pleaded in his Favour, I brought ſo many Objections againſt his Deſign, that he was conſtrained to give it over, and yet he returned without any Cauſe of Complaint. After the Death of the Queen of *Scots*, the King of *Spain* entered into a League with the Pope againſt me, and having declared againſt my Right to the Crown, they endeavoured to pull it from my Head; For the *Spaniards* made themſelves Maſters of *Daventer*, and the Duke of *Parma* laid Siege to *Sluys*. I then thought it Time to provide for defending my Realms; ſo that the Earl of *Leiceſter* was ſent away with all the Nobility of the Kingdom, at the Head of a numerous Army; and the Earl of *Eſſex* was one of the firſt to follow him. And tho' I ſcarce knew how to let him go, yet was I unwilling the Man I had a Kindneſs for, ſhould be idle at home, when an Opportunity offered, by glorious Actions abroad, to merit the Tenderneſs I had for him. When the General of my Army arrived at *London*, I was carried in Triumph to St. *Paul*'s, where I muſt own that my Joy to ſee the Earl of *Eſſex* was greater than that for the Victory. And amongſt all the Perſons of ſeveral Ranks, I could diſtinguiſh the Earl, on whom my Eyes were fixed. Soon after this Expedition the Earl of *Eſſex* fell into a deep

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Melancholy; I gueſſed it the Effect of Paſſion he was unwilling to diſcloſe, and fancied myſelf to be the Object of it. But the Confuſion of ſuch a Declaration ſoon made me change my Mind; and yet I ſcarce could tell what to reſolve upon: I knew I had a Tenderneſs for *Eſſex*, and fain I'd have had him anſwer it with a reciprocal Affection. And this was all the Reſolution I could come to. But ſtill the Earl of *Eſſex* had a Cloud upon his Brows, and fancying myſelf to be the Cauſe, I could receive no Satisfaction till he had declared himſelf. And therefore as he came to thank me for the Government of *Ireland*, I was reſolv'd to bring about what I deſigned. My Lord, ſaid I, you need not enlarge on what I am already well aſſured of. You may now in your Turn oblige me: It preſſes me hard to provide *England* a King, and have no Mind to make it among Foreigners; I will take your Advice, which of my Subjects it is you think moſt worthy of this Dignity. Madam, ſaid he, I dare not ſpeak my Mind. Did you know, ſaid I, what moves me to this Confidence in you, you would expreſs yourſelf with more Freedom: Tell me whether you think the Earl of *Leiceſter* deſerves to be your Prince. He is well born, replied *Eſſex*, and will anſwer the Honour your Majeſty intends him. Is that all you have to ſay to me, ſaid I. Ah! Madam, ſays he, I ſhould have more to ſay to you for myſelf than the Earl of *Leiceſter*. What hinders you? ſaid I. The Reſpect I have for your Majeſty, anſwer'd he; I am in Love, Madam, and 'tis not fit to make my Queen my Confident. I bluſh'd at theſe Words, and ſaid, I have that Value for you, my Lord, that I find no Averſion to be of your Council. Said he, I am paſſionately enamour'd with the Counteſs of *Rutland*, and I cannot live without your Majeſty conſents that ſhe ſhall make me happy. It

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is not eaſy to gueſs how much I was confounded at this Explication; having flattered myſelf, that it was me he would have named: But making my Grief give Place to my Glory, I labour'd under all the Confuſion imaginable; and putting on all the Aſſurance I was capable of, I reply'd, You have made a good Choice, and the Counteſs of *Rutland* deſerves the Kindneſs you profeſs for her. Madam, replied he, you have done more for me in approving of my Paſſion, than if you had procured me the Empire of the Univerſe. Is it your Deſire, added I with a Sigh, that I ſhould give her to you? I deſire any Thing, replied he, that may prevent me from dying for Love of her. Go your Way then, ſaid I, be aſſured I will concern myſelf in your Amours: But give not the Earl of *Leiceſter* the leaſt Intimation of the Secret I've imparted to you.

I found it extremely difficult to re-aſſume the Uſe of that Reaſon I had almoſt loſt in the Enlargement of Jealouſy: But it was but juſt upon me, in calling the Counteſs of *Rutland* to Court after the Death of her Husband, when I ought to have conſidered, that the Splendor of her Beauty, added to the Charms of her Youth, were ſufficient to carry away the Prize of Love from all Competitors. Yet I never took Notice of any Regard the Earl of *Eſſex* had for her, above the other Ladies of the Court. The Trouble I was in is unſpeakable; but think, Madam, what an Aggravation it was to find him ſo far from apprehending my Meaning, that he went immediately to carry my Rival the Tidings of his Succeſs with me. This very Thought made me reſolve to delay what I could not hinder; ſo went out of my Cloſet to my Chamber to call him back. But I thought I heard the Earl of *Leiceſter*'s Voice and his in the Anti-chamber, and going to the Door, found it was what I thought: You are happy, ſaid

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he, in having the Privilege of entertaining the Queen as long as you pleaſe, when others can't obtain that Bleſſing for a Moment. I doubt not, replied *Eſſex*, but you better deſerve, and I believe you'll find more Pleaſure in it; and ſo left him and went to his Miſtreſs. This freſh Provocation brought me into ſo much Confuſion, that I became as ſenſleſs as if I'd been transform'd into a Statue: But my Diſcretion prevailed over my Weakneſs. The Earl of *Leiceſter* came into my Preſence ſoon after, but perceiving me in ſome Diſorder he withdrew.

Not long before, I had ſent to congratulate the King of *Navarre* on his Acceſſion to the Crown of *France*; and being inform'd that he wanted ſome Aſſiſtence, I reſolved to ſupply him with Forces, and ſend them under the Command of the Earl of *Eſſex*: But tho' I flatter'd myſelf at firſt, with the Deſire I had to forget him, yet I found it was rather a ſecret Deſign of Revenge, by removing him out of the Sight of a Rival that was ſo dear to him. I ſent for the Earl of *Eſſex* to attend me, to whom I delivered my Mind in this Manner, I know you love Honour, and therefore believe you will not prefer the Pleaſure of ſighing before your Miſtreſs to the Opportunities of acquiring Glory; you ſhall command the Troops I am ſending to the *French* King's Aſſiſtance. To which he replied, How great a Paſſion ſoever I have for my Miſtreſs, I ſhall prefer the Honour of obeying your Commands before it. Soon after the Counteſs of *Rutland* deſir'd my Permiſſion to retire a conſiderable Diſtance from *London*, to which I conſented. I need not ſpeak of what followed his going into *France*, for all *Europe* ſoon rung with the Fame of his great Actions; and I cannot ſay, but that I was well enough pleaſed to hear him commended. I might have called him as ſoon as *France* was at quiet; but not being deſir'd

ſir'd by him to do it, I ordered him to join Admiral *Howard*, whom I had ſent for *Spain*. And as he had before in that Kingdom, ſo now he did Wonders in *Spain*, and after he had taken *Calais*, and pillag'd the Coaſt of *Portugal*, he put to Sea again, to return to *England*; but the Fleet was diſperſed by a dreadful Storm, inſomuch that we had News that the Earl of *Eſſex* was loſt: And then it was that I became more ſenſible than ever of the Regard I had for him: And it is impoſſible to ſay what I ſuffered whilſt I apprehended him loſt; but News was brought me, that by the Aſſiſtance of Admiral *Howard*, he was arriv'd at *Plymouth*; from whence in a very ſhort Time, he came to Court.

But tho' I had ſo grieved at his ſuppoſed Death, and was tranſported with a thouſand Joys at the News of his being alive, yet, Thoughts of my ſeeing him ſigh for another, filled me with ſo much Jealouſy, that I had once reſolv'd to order him to give the Council an Account of his Conduct, and not to admit him into my Preſence: But when I was about to put my Reſolves in Execution, the Tenderneſs I had for him, made all my Reſolutions flag, and I was forced to follow my Inclinations, and ſee the moſt formidable Enemy of my Repoſe; but you will wonder to hear how agreeably I was ſurpriſed, to find that his Abſence had weaned his Affection from the Counteſs of *Rutland*; for he was no longer the ſame Man I obſerv'd him to be before his Departure, he had the Air of an entire Satisfaction in his Looks, and all his Actions brisk and gay; and I could not but think there were as many Smiles in his Face, tho' the Counteſs of *Rutland* was abſent, as I found Joys in my Heart at the Explication he made: I ſee you again, ſaid I to him, return'd with Victory, but it is not in my Power to reward your laſt Services with a Sight

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of the Counteſs of *Rutland*; but if any Thing I can do can comfort you,—I am eaſily comforted for her Abſence, replied he very briskly, when I am permitted to ſee your Majeſty; the Counteſs of *Rutland* is now no more than other Ladies of the Court. Are you no longer in Love with her? replied I; you have ſpoken too faſt, when you ſee her again,—If I ſee her again, ſaid he, it ſhall be without theſe Tranſports I expreſs'd for her. What, replied I, are you not afraid of the Reproaches of a provok'd Miſtreſs. No, Madam, ſaid he, with an Air of perfect Freedom, I am only concern'd to do my Duty, and approve myſelf worthy your Majeſty's Favours. This, anſwer'd I, deſerves my Acknowledgments, and Time ſhall let you ſee I am not ungrateful.

After this, I appeal to you, Madam, whether I had not Reaſon to believe he was cured of his firſt Paſſion, which left me not without ſome Hopes, that Time might make him entertain ſome Kindneſs for myſelf; in this State Things remained till the Earl of *Tyrone* had rais'd ſuch a Rebellion in *Ireland* as obliged me to ſend Forces over to ſubdue them; and ſeeing the Earl of *Eſſex* under a Neceſſity of going thither, I could by no Means omit giving him that Kingdom to command. Upon the News of the Troubles in *Ireland*, he came and threw himſelf at my Feet, and begged that he might have the Quieting of that Diſturbance. The Zeal you expreſs for undertaking great Actions, ſaid I, may not poſſibly be ſo pleaſing as you imagine; and all the Advantages that may redound to *England* thro' your Valour, is much leſs than the Trouble it gives me, who had rather hazard my Crown than endanger your Life,—I am ambitious yet,—Ah! my Lord, ſave me the Confuſion of a more particular Explication, of what you might eaſily have long ſince

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underſtood. I might, perhaps, preſume too far in my Wiſhes, ſays the Earl, in ſome Diſorder. Wiſh boldly, ſays I; I love, and if I bluſh to tell you ſo, 'tis not that I am either aſhamed or repent of it. You may believe this a very hard Task for one of my Humour, who have ſeen you ſigh for another, when at the ſame Time I have ſlighted Kings for your Sake, and would have ſacrificed more to your Satisfaction. What, Madam! cried he much aſtoniſh'd, have you loved me, and I been ſo unfortunate to make myſelf unworthy of your Kindneſs by thoſe Sighs you did diſcover? Did my Eyes never tell you what I looked for in yours? ſaid I. I never had the Boldneſs, anſwered he, to make a Conſtruction of your Looks. Your Fear, ſaid I, was the Effect of Indifference, but no more of what is paſt: Tell me now if you can love me. Rather ask me, Madam, ſaid he, if all the Affections of my Soul can merit your Love? and whether the Earl of *Leiceſter* ſhall not carry the Day from me. The Earl of *Leiceſter*, ſaid I, was but a Pretence to make you ſpeak, I told you the Thoughts I had of you; my Trouble was not ſmall, both in your Abſence and ſince your Return, but all is forgotten; be henceforth as I wiſh, and doubt not of being happy. He ſeemed to be diſordered at what I ſaid, which I imputed as an Effect of his Joy. I now thought it Time to be no longer ſcrupulous, for I had gone ſo far that there was no retreating: And therefore, added I, I will no longer keep you in Suſpence, but to convince you of the Truth of what I have ſpoken, take this (delivering him a Ring) as an Aſſurance of my Favour, keep it as a Pledge of my Kindneſs, which I conjure you to preſerve in the State it is in; and on that Condition I promiſe never to deny you any Thing you deſire, when you ſhew me this Ring, tho' it coſt me my Life and

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Fortune. At the receiving of this Ring, his Acknowledgments were ſuitable to ſo great a Favour, nor was he wanting in his Promiſes of as high a Nature. In a few Days after he went for *Ireland*, and left me in the ſtrongeſt Aſſurances that his Paſſion was equal to mine: But he was hardly got up to the Rebels, when he was repreſented to me as one of the greateſt Traitors to my Crown and Dignity, and charged with ſuch Crimes, that I could not withſtand his Impriſonment, nor that of his Friend the Earl of *Southampton*.

Here the Queen ended her Diſcourſe; but this Recapitulation of what had paſſed between her and *Eſſex*, having revived the Memory of her paſt Amours, would not ſuffer her to put an End to her Troubles; nor was the Counteſs of *Nottingham* without her Concern in this Matter, for ſhe, as well as the Queen, had entertained a fruitleſs Paſſion for *Eſſex*, and had employed all the Art ſhe was able to raiſe in him the like Flame: And now having underſtood for what Reaſon ſhe was ſlighted by him, it alſo increaſed her Reſentment. Therefore all the Return ſhe made to what the Queen had told her, was to expreſs a Zeal to her Service, and to perſuade her from having any Kindneſs for the Earl, upon whoſe Ruin ſhe thought he merited, for not anſwering the Paſſion ſhe formerly had of him. But tho' the Earl could not anſwer the Counteſs's Deſire no more than he had done the Queen's, yet the Counteſs had another Admirer, Secretary *Cecil*, who in the Midſt of his Gravity diſcovered ſome Charms in the Counteſs of *Nottingham*, that created in him a ſtrong Paſſion for her; and this Paſſion was increaſed in both, by the Hatred they had profeſs'd againſt the Earl of *Eſſex*, tho' from different Cauſes; *Cecil*, becauſe he look'd upon the Earl as the Obſtacle of his ambitious Pretentions;

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and the Counteſs, from that Rage and Averſion which generally reſults from that Love that's anſwer'd with Neglect. When the Counteſs had taken Leave of the Queen, ſhe preſently concerted the Meaſures that were to be taken for the Earl's Deſtruction. The firſt Step whereunto was, *Cecil* preſſing the Queen to bring *Eſſex* to a Trial; and at the ſame Time caus'd the News of his Death to be ſpread throughout the Kingdom. In the mean Time the unfortunate *Eſſex* was not without having his Thoughts exerciſed about his own Affairs: He knew that he was beloved of the Queen, and knew that it was not in his Power to make her reciprocal Returns: He alſo knew as well that he had deceived her, and that ſhe might juſtly reproach him. As for the Queen, notwithſtanding all the black Charges againſt *Eſſex*, ſhe had ſtill ſuch a ſecret Inclination for him, that ſhe had not the Power to give him up to his ill Fortune, without at leaſt having heard him herſelf; to which End ſhe took a Reſolution to go to his Houſe (where he was confin'd) and reproach him as he deſerv'd; or elſe, which ſhe much rather deſired, to find him innocent.

The Earl was ſurprized at the Queen's coming in, and ſhe felt no ſmall Emotion in herſelf at the ſeeing him there a Priſoner; but the Earl recovering himſelf, ſaluted her with a profound Reſpect; and then ſo ſteadily fix'd his Eyes on her, that in ſpite of all her Reſolutions, ſhe could not forbear ſhedding ſome Tears, which as ſhe was drying up, Well, my Lord, ſaid ſhe, you ſee what I do for you, notwithſtanding all the Crimes I can reproach you with. I come to hear what you will ſay in your Juſtification. Madam, replied he ſighing, my greateſt Crime is, that I thought myſelf too happy. Had you ſat down there, ſaid the Queen, I ſhould have been too well pleaſed to have complain'd of you;

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but what Need was there of your having Recourſe to violent Means to make yourſelf happy of a Fortune, which I was willing to beſtow upon you, and to ſhare with you in? What Reaſon could you have to ſeek the Protection of the Kings of *Scotland* and *Spain*? Did any Intereſt oblige you to a ſecret Correſpondence with *Tyrone*? Is it by Fury and Treaſon you ſhew your Zeal for me and the Publick; or, is all we have ſeen and heard of you but Illuſion and Fancy? Yes, Madam, replied the Earl; thoſe Accuſations of Treaſon it was that run me upon the Reſiſtance I have made: You have been pleaſed to heap Favours upon me, and I flatter'd myſelf with Expectation of a Thouſand Pleaſures, which you had not abſolutely forbid me to hope for: This let looſe the Envy of others againſt my good Fortune; they abuſed your Majeſty with Miſinformations; and I had the Fortune to be aſſured, that your Majeſty had order'd me to be arreſted. I confeſs, Madam, I was in a Rage to ſee myſelf abandoned by your Majeſty, and on the Point of ſuffering perhaps a ſhameful Death. I thought it neither for my Reputation, nor your Majeſty's Honour, that I ſhould die as a Criminal. This put me upon having Recourſe to thoſe Succours and Aſſiſtance they charge me with, and the Reſolution I took to go out of *England* in hopes to confound my Accuſers; but I found all the Paſſages ſtopt, and muſt acknowledge in that deſperate Condition I vented my Fury by ſeeking Revenge on your Miniſters. They, Madam, and only they, were the Objects of the Rebellion I am charged with. The Earl ſaid many other Things to this Purpoſe, which work'd the Queen into ſo good an Opinion of him, that ſhe told him, ſhe would cauſe a Council to be called in two Days Time, wherein ſhe would declare him innocent,

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and reſtore him to his former Employments: Leaving *Eſſex*, and going away very well ſatisfied with what had paſſed between them. The Queen was fully reſolv'd upon what ſhe had promiſed *Eſſex*; and the next Morning ſent for *Cecil*, (the Counteſs of *Nottingham* at the ſame Time waiting on her) to whom ſhe imparted her Reſolution, and ordered *Cecil* to ſummon a Council to that End. This made *Cecil* and the Counteſs look one upon another, as Perſons whoſe Projects for the Earl's Deſtruction were now abortive. They ſaw the Queen was inflexible in her Reſolutions; and tho' both *Cecil* and the Counteſs had ſpoken to the Queen to divert her from her Reſolution, yet 'twas to no Purpoſe; *Cecil* was forced to order an extraordinary Call of the Council.

But alas! ſuch is the Viciſitude of all human Things, that oftentimes ſome intervening Accident or other renders all our Hopes abortive; and ſo it happen'd with the Earl of *Eſſex*: For as the Queen was going to the Council to declare him innocent, Word was brought her that the Counteſs of *Rutland* deſir'd to wait on her. The Queen commanded ſhe ſhould be admitted: As ſoon as ſhe came in, ſhe threw herſelf at the Queen's Feet, and with a Tone that denoted the Extremity of her Grief, Madam, ſaid ſhe, I am a humble Petitioner to implore your Majeſty's Compaſſion for the unfortunate Earl of *Eſſex*. Madam, anſwer'd the Queen with ſome Surprize, how came you concern'd for him, who hath requited you with much Indifference, I expected you were rather come to join your Reſentments with mine, that you might revenge the Injury done to your Beauty. No, Madam, replied the Counteſs, 'tis not the Tranſports of a forſaken Miſtreſs that has brought me into your Majeſty's Preſence, but tender Affections due from a virtu-

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ous Wife to a Husband that ſhe dearly loves; in begging for the Earl of *Eſſex*, I beg for myſelf: It is no Time for them to dally, who are on the Bank of a Precipice. I own, Madam, that, after a thouſand Croſſes, we had that Love for each other, that we married privately, contrary to the Reſpect due from us to your Majeſty. This put the Earl upon ſeeking Refuge out of your Dominions, he thought it fit I ſhould go out of them, but never entertained a Thought of conſpiring againſt your Majeſty: Conſider, Madam, I beſeech you, that a few Drops of Blood at your Diſpoſal, and a poor Life you are Miſtreſs of, are not a ſuitable Revenge to the Grandeur of a Queen adored for ſo many Virtues, but moſt of all for her Clemency.

What a heart-rending Piece of News was this, to one who had promiſed herſelf all the Satisfaction that a pleaſing Reconciliation with the Man ſhe loved could afford her. What Grief and Anger muſt ſuch a Diſappointment raiſe? eſpecially in a Sovereign Queen, paſſionately in Love, and naturally haughty and high ſpirited, to ſee herſelf thus barbarouſly betrayed, and not to find it out till the very Moment that ſhe was going to advance him to the higheſt Pinacle of Honour: Yet was ſhe unwilling the Counteſs ſhould know any Thing of her Grief, and therefore fixing her Eyes upon her, with a Countenance full of Anger and Severity, The Life you beg of me, ſaid ſhe, is not in my Power; the Peers are his Judges. Ah! Madam, ſaid the ſorrowful Counteſs, my Husband is loſt if you give him up to their Fury, their Jealouſy will do what Juſtice cannot. Why ſhould you trouble yourſelf, ſaid the Queen, if he be not guilty? Tho' I am very ſure he is innocent, replied the Counteſs, yet your cruel Miniſters are not diſpoſed to believe it: Let me intreat you, Ma-

dam, if your Majeſty will grant me no more, to be put in the ſame Priſon with him; I am as criminal as he, and perhaps more. I wiſh it was in my Power to grant your Deſire, ſaid the Queen, but common Policy forbids it; you may if you pleaſe wait his Fate and your own in a Chamber in this Palace. Ah! Madam, the laſt Favour I beg of you, ſaid the Counteſs, is, that I may be put into Irons; and what can you fear from a Grief without Power. I fear being troubled with it, and I will be obeyed, anſwered the Queen in a Tranſport of Anger, and ſo left her, giving Orders for her being put under Guards in a Chamber.

It was eaſy to ſee the Fury of the Queen (by ſeeing herſelf deceived by him who had the chief Aſcendant in her Soul) was heighten'd to a Degree of Madneſs; all her Tenderneſs was now forgotten, and Revenge took up all her Thoughts. Death, cried ſhe to herſelf, ſhall be the Reward of his Ingratitude, and I will make his Puniſhment an Example to the whole World. With this Reſolution ſhe came to the Council, and named the Peers for trying the Earls of *Eſſex* and *Southampton*. *Cecil* was ſurpriz'd to hear the Queen declare herſelf againſt *Eſſex*, whom he verily believed ſhe was reſolved to pardon; and he could not conceal the Satisfaction he took in it, but forthwith repairs to the Counteſs of *Nottingham*, and made her a Partaker of the ſame Joy: Yet they could not think it compleat while *Eſſex* was only a Priſoner in his own Houſe; and therefore was reſolved to ſtrike while the Iron was hot, and get an Order from the Queen for putting him in the Tower of *London*, which as it was then eaſily obtained, it was as ſpeedily executed. The Earl, who, according to the Queen's Promiſe, expected to be ſet at Liberty, not knowing what had paſſed, was much ſurpriz'd

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to find himſelf under a ſtraiter Confinement, and therefore prepared for the worſt that might happen. The Counteſs, his Lady, having no Comfort but her Tears, nor Company but her diſmal Apprehenſions, endeavoured from the Compaſſion of her Guards, to learn ſomewhat of her Husband's Condition; and by them ſhe was told his Judges were appointed, and that he was remov'd to the Tower, upon this ſhe ſolicited her Guards, by the powerful Charms of Gold, to bring her to a Sight of her Husband, proteſting ſhe neither deſigned her own Liberty nor her Husband's, but only a few Minutes private Diſcourſe with him; which they undertook and effected by the Help of their Companions in the Tower.

The unfortunate Earl (ignorant of what had happen'd at *Whitehall*) being told he was in a few Days to appear before his Judges, expected the End of his Misfortunes with a Conſtancy worthy of him, and in the Midſt of his Afflictions comforted himſelf that his Counteſs being retired into *Scotland*, was out of Danger, and therefore was the more ſurprized to ſee her there. Ah! Madam, ſaid he, how am I diſappointed in the chiefeſt of my Hopes? I little thought to ſee you in this fatal Place; what in the Name of Wonder had Power to bring you hither? My Grief and my Guards, replied the Counteſs, have brought me hither. Your Guards! what, Madam, are you the Queen's Priſoner? ſaid the Earl. Yes, ſaid ſhe, and the Queen is ſo angry, we are paſt Hope; I was, as you deſired me, retiring to a Place of Safety, but the News of your Death put a Stop to my Journey; for tho' it was not in my Power to deliver you out of Trouble, yet I thought it my Duty to ſhare them with you; this made me preſent myſelf to the Queen, and ſeek to move her Compaſſion; but alas! ſhe's inexorable.

Ah!

Ah! Madam, ſaid the Earl, you have ruin'd us beyond retrieving; but had you not appeared I had been now at Liberty, for by a dextrous Management, I had regained the Queen's Favour; but now ſhe knows I am married, there remains no Hopes. 'Tis impoſſible to deſcribe the Affliction the Counteſs was in at theſe Words: She lamented her Ignorance in the moſt pathetick Terms; and after having ſtrove to out-rival each other in their Tenderneſs, were parted by their Guards amidſt thoſe melting Tears that would have moved a Heart of Marble. Soon after this followed the Trials of the Earls of *Eſſex* and *Southampton*; but the Queen did not, as it was expected, comprehend the Counteſs of *Eſſex* in her Husband's Impeachment. The Priſoners were charged with holding a criminal Correſpondence with the Kings of *Scotland* and *Spain*; that they had ſecret Alliance with *Tyrone*, and laid a Plot againſt the Queen's Authority. To which the Earls made a very ſtout Defence. *Cecil* tho' a politick Man, diſcovered too much the Malignity of his Intentions, and ſhewed himſelf an inveterate Enemy. *Eſſex* ſaw well enough his Animoſity, but anſwered it with an undaunted Conſtancy; yet for all the brave Defence he made, he was condemn'd, and Sentence paſs'd on him by the Lord High Steward. The Earl of *Eſſex* was not at all moved for himſelf, but was very much concern'd for the Earl of *Southampton*, who only for his Love to him was brought under the ſame Condemnation, and interceded to the Judges in his Behalf with the greateſt Tenderneſs. When the Queen underſtood what had paſſed, ſhe gave ſecret Orders to defer their Execution; finding it very difficult to raiſe Diſpleaſure equal to her Tenderneſs. And *Cecil* then trembled to find the Sentence he heard pronounced with ſo much Pleaſure delayed

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by the Queen's Pity: Nor was the Counteſs of *Nottingham*'s Trouble leſs on that Account.

But while the Earl of *Eſſex* expected the Cataſtrophe of this Tragedy, his Counteſs was told he was executed; which filled her with ſo much Sorrow that the whole Court heard her Lamentation; nor was the Queen ignorant, tho' ſhe was unconcern'd: Let her cry, ſaid ſhe to the Counteſs of *Nottingham*, ſhe muſt ſhed many more to wipe out the Scores of Tears ſhe hath coſt me. The Counteſs well enough pleaſed at what the Queen ſaid, ſtrove more to irritate than allay her Anger; which that ſhe might the better keep up, ſhe made a hypocritical Viſit to the Counteſs of *Eſſex*, not to condole her unfortunate Circumſtances, but to render her more miſerable; for tho' ſhe found her in ſo deplorable a Condition, that ſhe fell every Minute into the Arms of the Women about her, and recovered only to lament the more pitifully, yet the Counteſs of *Nottingham* beheld all with ſo much Unconcern as ſhewed plainly the Hardneſs of her Heart: But, that ſhe might find out the Myſteries of their Love, ſhe urged the Counteſs to make a Relation of it, which ſhe did at large; but there was one Thing troubled the Counteſs of *Nottingham* extremely, which ſhe had firſt heard from the Queen, and afterwards confirm'd by the Counteſs of *Eſſex*; and that was the Ring the Earl had from the Queen, which when ever he ſent it to her, ſhe promiſed to deliver him. This Secret ſhe imparted to *Cecil*, to whom alſo it gave a terrible Diſturbance; for while the Earl kept that, they looked upon him as Maſter of his own Fortune. And therefore they both reſolved to watch the Earl ſo narrowly, that he ſhould get none to deliver it to the Queen without their Knowledge, and ſo to corrupt the Perſon that was to carry it, that it never

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ſhould be given her. The Plot being thus laid betwixt them, the Counteſs of *Nottingham* goes to the Queen to incenſe her againſt *Eſſex*, tells her all ſhe had heard from his Counteſs, and then aggravates all againſt him; puts the Queen in Mind of his Hypocriſy, in pretending to be cured of his Paſſion for the Counteſs of *Rutland*, when he had privately married her, and his Pride in not ſubmitting himſelf to her Majeſty in the greateſt Calamity, and under the hourly Expectation of Death.

Theſe Things the Counteſs preſſed ſo warmly, that the Queen thought herſelf ſole Miſtreſs of her Reſolutions, and doubted not but ſhe could ſee him die: And yet ſhe no ſooner thought ſo, but the natural Inclinations ſhe had for him would preſently inſpire her with more gentle Reſolutions. Thus the Counteſs left the Queen to her own reſtleſs Thoughts until the Morning: And if the Queen had but little Reſt that Night, the Counteſs of *Nottingham* had not much more; but were alike reſtleſs, the one agitated by Love, the other by Revenge. The Morning following the Counteſs, as uſual, waited on the Queen. You find me, ſaid the Queen, in a lamentable Condition; the Wretch to whom I owe all I ſuffer, is continually in my Mind, which has has framed the moſt pitiful Idea imaginable of his preſent Condition; and ſhall I do nothing for him in ſuch Extremity? Shall I ſuffer him to periſh, as if I had no more Regard for him than another, when I have declared I lov'd him? Whatever your Majeſty ſhall pleaſe to do in his Favour, anſwered the Counteſs, will be the Effect of your pure Generoſity, ſince he hath not in the leaſt ſolicited any from you.

The Earl had not indeed hitherto petitioned for a Favour which he thought the Queen's Goodneſs would have beſtowed on him; but when he beheld him-

himſelf at the Point of being carried to the Scaffold, he reſolved to implore her Mercy, and to put her in Mind of her Promiſes. And tho' he knew the Counteſs of *Nottingham* had no great Kindneſs for him, yet he knew ſhe was the Queen's Favourite, and therefore ſent to deſire the Favour of a Viſit from her: The Counteſs, uneaſy till ſhe knew the Cauſe of his Requeſt, went immediately to him, without acquainting the Queen, to whom the Earl thus addreſs'd himſelf: Madam, I am not ignorant of the Power you have over the Queen; and would you be pleaſed to join it to my repentant Sorrow for having offending her, I doubt not but we may prevail. Tell her then, quoth the Earl putting his Knees to the Ground, that you have ſeen me in this ſupplicant Poſture, full of Grief for having deſerved her Hatred: Reſtore her this Ring, and intreat her to remember her Promiſe when ſhe gave it me; I beg my Life by this Pledge, and ſhe cannot deny it me without forgetting her Oaths. I no longer can look upon Life as a Thing pleaſing to me, but a miſerable Wife, and the Intereſt of a Son, preſs me to continue it as long as I can.

Having left the Earl, the cruel Woman, inſtead of going to the Queen, went directly to *Cecil*, and gave him the pleaſing Relation of what had paſſed between her and the Earl, who was over joyed to ſee in his Power the ſole Obſtacle againſt *Eſſex*'s Death. And then they went both of them together to the Queen, who enquiring how *Eſſex* received her laſt Orders, *Cecil* anſwered, He cannot prevail with himſelf to ſhew the leaſt Sign of Repentance; he thinks of nothing but his Wife, and ſhe is the ſole Object of his Diſcourſe to thoſe that go to him. Let him die then, let him periſh, ſaid Queen very angerly, ſince he will have it ſo.

Cecil thirſted too much after the Earl's Blood,

to let the Queen have the leaſt Time for Reflection, ſo that while the Earl of *Eſſex* was expecting the Iſſue of the Counteſs of *Nottingham*'s faithful Promiſes, a Scaffold was erected in the Tower for his Execution. So great was his Preſence of Mind, that he betrayed not the leaſt Weakneſs, nor could any Man meet Death with more Conſtancy and Reſolution: His Head was ſevered from his Body at three Blows.

Tho' the Queen (provoked to a Pitch of Anger by the falſe Reports of *Cecil*) had conſented to his Execution, yet ſhe ſoon after repented of her Reſentment, and reſolved to pardon him, ſending an Officer to ſtop their Proceedings, but he came too late, for the Earl was already executed. The Counteſs of *Nottingham*, after having begg'd an Audience, confeſs'd what paſs'd between the Earl of *Eſſex* and herſelf, and declar'd her Perfidiouſneſs in keeping the Ring which he gave her to carry to the Queen with the moſt humble Submiſſion, and therewith gave the Queen the Ring, who at this Relation had ſcarce Life enough to receive it; and turning to the expiring Counteſs, with a Look of the higheſt Indignation, ſaid, Perfidious Wretch, what Remorſe has thou expoſed me to! Whether Heaven will pardon thy Crimes I know not, but ſure I am, I ſhall never forget them: Having thus ſaid, the Queen left her, and the Counteſs ſoon after died. This Diſcovery did ſo increaſe the Queen's Grief, that ſhe likewiſe expired in a ſhort Time after.

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